

Week 5: Who Do You Say I Am?

Overview: Mark 8:27–9:50 is the turning point of the entire Gospel. Everything before it asks, ‘who is Jesus?’; everything after follows the implications of the answer. Peter confesses the Messiah, Jesus predicts his death three times, the Transfiguration reveals his glory, and the disciples argue about greatness on the way down the mountain.

Passages covered this week: Mark 8:27- Mark 9

Key Scripture: Mark 8:27-38

CONTENT

Key Takeaway: Jesus asks everyone the same question: who do you say I am? The answer isn’t just theological – it determines everything about how you live.

Key Points

- Who do people say I am? Who do you say I am? (Mark 8:27–29) – primary focus
 - Start with the crowd’s answers: John the Baptist, Elijah, a prophet. Not wrong - just incomplete.
 - ‘But what about you?’ The pivot to personal. This question lands the same way in every generation. There is no neutral answer. Indifference is an answer.
- Peter gets it right, then immediately wrong (Mark 8:29–33)
 - You are the Messiah: the best answer in the room, and the hinge of the Gospel
 - Jesus predicts suffering, rejection, death, resurrection. Peter rebukes him.
 - Jesus calls Peter’s correction satanic — because a Messiah who doesn’t suffer cannot save. The cross is not plan B.
- Take up your cross (Mark 8:34–38) – primary focus
 - Deny yourself: the self that is running the show has to step down
 - Losing your life to find it: the upside-down logic of the kingdom
 - What does it profit a man to gain the whole world and lose his soul? The most important trade-off question in history
- The Transfiguration (Mark 9:1–8)
 - Peter, James, and John see Jesus in his glory – the fullness of who he is, briefly unveiled
 - Moses and Elijah: the Law and the Prophets, both pointing to Jesus
 - ‘This is my Son, whom I love. Listen to him.’ The Father’s endorsement of everything Jesus has been saying
- Demon, disciples, and humility (Mark 9:14–50)
 - Failed exorcism: this kind can only come out by prayer. Power flows from intimacy with God, not technique.

- Greatest in the kingdom: whoever wants to be first must be last. A child set in their midst.
- If your hand causes you to sin is radical amputation language. **Jesus is serious about holiness.**

Gospel Application: Jesus didn't just predict his death; he walked toward it on purpose. The Messiah had to suffer. The cross wasn't an accident. It was the only plan that could save us. When Peter confessed 'you are the Christ,' he was standing in front of the person whose death would make everything possible. Confessing Jesus as Lord today means the same thing (Romans 10:9).

Key Question: Who do you say Jesus is – not what you've been told or what sounds right, but actually? And does your life match your answer?

APPLICATION

Activity Suggestions

- Hang a poster on the wall with the question "Who do you say I am"? Have students write their responses as they arrive and reference it during the message.

Community Group Questions

- Who do people at your school say Jesus is? What are the most common answers?
- Who do you say he is (be honest)? Does your daily life match that answer?
- Why did Jesus rebuke Peter so sharply after Peter got the right answer? What was wrong with Peter's version of Messiah?
- What does it actually mean to 'take up your cross'? What does that look like for a student in 2026 specifically?
- What's one thing you're tempted to gain right now that might actually cost you something more important?